IN THE CLAIMS

1-91. (canceled).

92. (amended) A method, comprising:

a) generating a ring signal at a remote telephone interface and starting a configurable timer of a voice over packet data network switched call control system that measures a configurable time period over which said ring signal is applied at said remote telephone interface, said generating a ring signal and said starting a configurable timer both a consequence of a connection that was established toward said remote telephone interface over a packet data network in order to place a call through said remote telephone interface;

b) ceasing said ring signal and sending a control message in response to said configurable timer expiring, said sending a control message further comprising sending said control message over said packet data network to a system that initiated said connection, said system having initiated said connection in response to a ring signal observed at a telephone interface maintained by said system; and

c) creating an "on-hook" signal at said telephone interface maintained by said system as a consequence of said system having received said control message over the packet data network.

93. (amended) The method of claim 92 further wherein said configurable timer lasts within a range of 2 to 3 minutes inclusive.

94. (previously presented) The method of claim 92 wherein said packet data network further comprises an Internet Protocol (IP) network.

95. (previously presented) The method of claim 92 wherein said packet data network further comprises a Frame Relay network.

96. (previously presented) The method of claim 92 wherein said packet data network further comprises a High level Data Link Control (HDLC) network.

97. (previously presented) The method of claim 92 wherein said packet data network further comprises an Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM) network.

98. (previously presented) The method of claim 92 wherein said remote telephone interface resides at a PBX.

99. (previously presented) The method of claim 92 wherein said remote telephone interface reside at a central office (CO).

100. (amended) An apparatus, comprising:

a) means for providing a ring signal at a remote telephone interface as consequence of a connection that was established toward said remote telephone interface over a packet data network;

b) configurable timer means that measures a configurable time period over which said ring signal is applied at said remote telephone interface;

c) means for ceasing said ring signal, said ceasing in response to said configurable timer expiring;

d) means for sending a control message, in response to said configurable timer expiring, over said packet data network to a system that initiated said connection, said system having initiated said connection in response to a ring signal observed at a telephone interface; and

e) means for providing an "on-hook" signal at said telephone interface as a consequence of said control message having been received by said system over the packet data network.

101. (amended) The apparatus of claim 100 wherein said configurable timer lasts within a range of 2 to 3 minutes inclusive.

102. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 100 wherein said packet data network further comprises an Internet Protocol (IP) network.

103. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 100 wherein said packet data network further comprises a Frame Relay network.

104. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 100 wherein said packet data network further comprises a High level Data Link Control (HDLC) network.

105. (previously presented) The method of claim 100 wherein said packet data network further comprises an Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM) network.

106. (previously presented) The method of claim 100 wherein said remote telephone interface resides at a PBX.

107. (amended) The method of claim [[92]] 100 wherein said remote telephone interface reside resides at a central office (CO).

108. (amended) An apparatus, comprising:

a first system communicatively coupled to a second system through a packet network;

said first system comprising:

     a) a configurable timer of a voice over packet data network switched call control system, said configurable timer to measure a time period over which a ring signal is applied;

     b) a telephone interface where said ring signal is generated;

     c) a first interface to said packet network, said first interface from where a control message is sent from said first system to said second system if said configurable timer expires;

        said second system comprising:

     a) a second interface to said packet network, said second interface where said control message is received;

b) a third interface that transitions from an off hook state to an on hook state in response to said <u>control</u> message being received <u>over the packet network</u>.

109. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 108 where said second system further comprises a VOPS control system communicatively coupled to said second interface and said interface.

110. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 108 wherein said third interface is a PBX interface.

111. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 108 wherein said third interface is a CO interface.

112. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 108 wherein said third interface is a PSTN interface.

113-114. (canceled).

115. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 108 wherein said packet network further comprises an Internet Protocol (IP) network.

116. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 108 wherein said packet network further comprises a Frame Relay network.

117. (amended) The apparatus of claim 108 wherein said packet data network further comprises a High level Data Link Control (HDLC) network.

118. (amended) The apparatus of claim 108 wherein said packet ~~data~~ network further comprises an Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM) network.

119. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 108 wherein said second system is a multiservice access concentrator (MAC) capable of:

receiving at least one data stream and at least one voice channel;

packetizing said received at least one data stream and packetizing said at least one voice channel;

multiplexing said packetized at least one data stream and said packetized at least one voice channel into a transport stream; and,

providing said transport stream to said packet network using a configurable trunk wherein, said MAC comprises a CPU communicatively coupled to a plurality of ports, said ports from where said data stream and voice channel are said received and from where said transport stream is said provided, said CPU coupled to memory.

120-160 (canceled).

161. (amended) A method, comprising:

a) receiving a first ring signal at a first telephone interface, said first ring signal in response to an attempt to place a call to a second telephone interface;

b) responding to said ring signal by applying an off-hook signal at said first telephone interface and establishing a connection toward said second telephone interface over a packet data network;

c) generating a second ring signal at said second telephone interface and starting a <u>configurable</u> timer <u>of a voice over packet data network switched call control system</u>;

d) responding to said <u>configurable</u> timer expiring by ceasing said ring signal and sending a <u>control</u> message over said packet data network; and,

e) receiving said <u>control</u> message <u>over the packet data network</u> and responding to said receiving by generating an on-hook signal at said telephone interface.

162. (amended) The method of claim 161 further wherein said timer lasts within a range of 2 to 3 minutes inclusive.

163. (previously presented) The method of claim 161 wherein said <u>configurable</u> packet data network further comprises an Internet Protocol (IP) network.

164. (previously presented) The method of claim 161 wherein said packet data network further comprises a Frame Relay network.

165. (previously presented) The method of claim 161 wherein said packet data network further comprises a High level Data Link Control (HDLC) network.

166. (previously presented) The method of claim 161 wherein said packet data network further comprises an Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM) network.

167. (presently amended) The method of claim 161 wherein said second telephone interface resides at a PBX.

168. (presently amended) The method of claim 161 wherein said second telephone interface resides at a central office (CO).